



**US Army Corps  
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Walla Walla District

# News Release

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## Walla Walla District sends help to hurricane-ravaged Baton Rouge

**WALLA WALLA, Wash.** – Two volunteers from the Walla Walla District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, are helping Hurricane Gustav victims patch up their rooftops near Baton Rouge, La.

John Pielli, a power plant operator from McNary Lock and Dam, and James Hovinga, a safety and occupational health specialist at the District headquarters, arrived in Baton Rouge on Friday to support FEMA's Operation Blue Roof program as quality assurance inspectors. The Corps-run temporary roofing program opened its doors on Sept. 7 for residents of local parishes to register for the roofing tarps and provide right-of-entry documents that would allow contractors to access their property to install them.

"Sunday was our first full day out working with contractors putting on the tarps," said Pielli, a Richland, Wash., resident, during a telephone interview today at a field location in Houma, La. "We're ramping up the pace and expect to have more contractor and inspectors in the field this week."

"The residents seem happy to see us," added Hovinga, a College Place, Wash., resident, who was with Pielli conducting inspections during the call. "The tarps are temporary until they can get their homes professionally re-roofed. The Blue Roof program helps keep the water out of the houses until then."

The program is run by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Louisiana Recovery Field Office, in Baton Rouge, as assigned by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

FEMA coordinates the federal government's role in preparing for, preventing, mitigating the effects of, responding to, and recovering from all domestic disasters, whether natural or man-made, including acts of terror.

Hovinga and Pielli anticipate spending at about a month in Louisiana to support hurricane recovery missions.

For more information about hurricane recovery efforts in Louisiana, go online to FEMA's Web site [www.fema.gov/news/event.fema?id=10489](http://www.fema.gov/news/event.fema?id=10489) <<http://www.fema.gov/news/event.fema?id=10489>> For more information about hurricane and severe storm activity, go online to the NWS National Hurricane Center's Web site at [www.nhc.noaa.gov](http://www.nhc.noaa.gov) <<http://www.nhc.noaa.gov>>

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